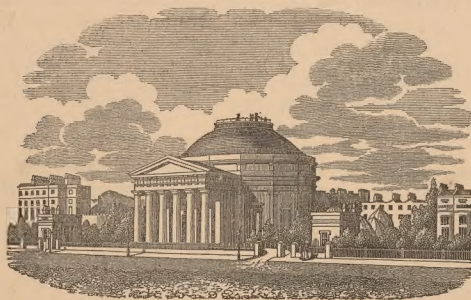


A BRIEF ACCOUNT
OF
THE COLOSSEUM,
IN THE REGENT'S PARK,
LONDON:

COMPRISING
A DESCRIPTION
OF
THE BUILDING;



THE PANORAMIC VIEW
FROM THE
TOP OF ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL,
THE CONSERVATORY, &c.

PRINTED FOR THE PROPRIETORS, AND SOLD AT THE EXHIBITION;
AND BY ALL BOOKSELLERS.
1829.

A BUREAU ACCOUNT
THE COLLEGE
IN THE UNIVERSITY
OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

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SOME ACCOUNT OF THE COLOSSEUM.

"PRODIGIOUS!—SCENES VAST AND WONDERFUL AWAIT OUR GAZE;—
NATURE AND ART CONTENDING FOR PRE-EMINENCE."—*Marvellous Realities, MS.*

IN the days of youth and insatiable curiosity we may undertake the toilsome and tiresome task of ascending 534 steps to the first gallery over the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral; and afterwards may even venture 82 steps higher, to the ball and to the cross: thence we may, perhaps, descry a few noted public steeples, bridges, the Thames, &c.; but it seldom happens that the atmosphere over London is clear, that the weather is serene, or that we can walk around the building, and comfortably examine the vast expanse:—our curiosity may be greatly excited, but it is rarely gratified. Not so in the Colosseum: here the ascent is easy, the sky is fine and bright, the atmosphere is clear—we can command a constant sunshine, and the spectator may easily and deliberately examine the many thousand objects beneath and around him, the vast extent of country, and the immense assemblage of buildings which London contains. Of all the panoramic pictures that ever were painted

in the world—of all the cities that ever were formed and inhabited by the human race—this view of the British metropolis may be said to be without parallel, and to be pre-eminent. The ocean, viewed from the summit of a high cliff—a boundless expanse of country, when seen from the apex of a lofty mountain, are unquestionably objects of grandeur and sublimity; but both are dull and vacant, when compared with the astounding view of London from the top of St. Paul's. This exhibits to the eye and mind, the dwellings of nearly a million and a half of human beings—a countless succession of churches, bridges, halls, theatres, and mansions—a forest of floating masts, and the manifold pursuits, occupations, and powers of its ever-active, ever-changing inhabitants.

The Colosseum as a building, and the panoramic picture it contains, are works of such novelty, magnitude, and singularity, that they seem almost to defy the

powers of description, and to baffle all attempts at being represented through the medium of language.—Yet the stranger seeks for information before he visits the exhibition; and after he has viewed it, is desirous to convey some account of its character to his friends.

Mr. HORNOR, the projector of this work, finished the sketches for its execution in 1824, having constructed scaffolding and a suspended house, or large box, above the highest cross of the Cathedral, at a time when a new ball and cross were required, to crown the summit of that edifice. The undertaking was daring and hazardous; but when accomplished, was calculated to produce such a picture as had never before been executed. From 1824 to the present time, the buildings, picture, and gardens, have been in progress. It is not requisite to explain, in this place, the reason for opening the exhibition before the last touches have been given: suffice it to say, that enthusiastic minds are not often regulated by the laws of prudence and discretion; and that the zealous projector was more eager to commence new and surprising designs, than to finish those in progress.

We will endeavour to furnish the reader and visitor with a concise, and at the same time an intelligible, account of this original, singular, and unique exhibition.

The BUILDING was commenced in 1824, by Mr. Peto, from the designs and working drawings of Mr. DECIMUS BURTON, and is highly creditable to the professional reputation of those gentlemen. It is polygonal on the outside, having 16 faces, each measuring 25 feet in length, and the whole occupies an area of 126 feet in diameter, externally, with a thickness of three feet of wall, at the ground. The height of the walls is 64 feet at the outside, 79 feet within, and to the sky-light 112 feet.

Fronting the West, is a bold and noble portico, with six fluted columns of the Grecian Doric order, sustaining a well-proportioned pediment. Its entablature is extended along the flanks, and also around the whole building. At each angle is a double antæ, or pilaster, rising from the base to the cornice; and above the parapet there are three gradini, or steps, from which springs a dome. This is crowned by a parapet, forming a circular gallery, for visitors to view the sub-jacent park, buildings, and distant country. The upper portion of this dome (75 feet in diameter) is glazed, for the purpose of lighting the whole of the interior, there being no side windows: the lower part of the dome is cased with sheets of copper, painted. Beneath the portico is a drive for carriages, and a paved path for foot passengers. A large and lofty doorway opens to a handsome but plain vestibule, with its walls painted in imitation of white marble, and its pilasters in imitation of Sienna marble. It is divided into three compartments, measuring 70 feet by 14, and is 40 feet in height, in the middle division. This is an intermediate building, between the open portico and the main work. On the left is a flight of descending stairs for visitors to the middle gallery; and on the right, another flight to view the saloon, the first gallery, the third gallery under the ball, (the original ball, removed from St. Paul's,) and the exterior parapet-gallery, on the summit of the building. A small, narrow, low corridor conducts the visitor to the centre of the rotunda, where he enters a spacious circular apartment, called the SALOON, fitted up with festooned and flowing draperies, hung and arranged in imitation of an immense tent, arched overhead, and formed with numerous recesses around the exterior verge, for settees and tables; whilst a collection of pictures, sculptured and fancy pieces, objects of virtu and curiosity, are dispersed through

the scene. This apartment is intended as a place of rest, or for promenade. In hot weather it affords a cool temperature, being subterranean; and in cold weather it will be mild, and comparatively warm. The immediate centre of this room, is occupied by a circular enclosure of strong and substantial frame-work, containing two spiral staircases, and a circular chamber, in which is suspended a small coved room, which will contain from 10 to 20 persons, and may be raised by secret machinery, with its company, to the first gallery.

The PICTURE.—From a balustraded gallery, and with a projecting frame beneath it, in exact imitation of the outer dome of St. Paul's Cathedral, the visitor is presented with a picture that cannot fail to create, at once, astonishment and delight: a scene which will inevitably perplex and confuse the eye and mind for some moments, but which, on further examination, will easily be understood. It presents such a *Pictorial History of London*—such a faithful display of its myriads of public and private buildings—such an impression of the vastness, wealth, business, pleasure, commerce, and luxury of the English metropolis, as nothing else can effect. Histories, descriptions, maps, and prints, are all imperfect and defective, when compared to this immense Panorama—they are scraps, and mere touches of the pen and pencil—whilst this imparts, at a glance, at one view, a *cyclopædia of information*—a concentrated history—a focal topography, of the largest and most influential city in the world. The immense area of surface which this picture occupies will surprise the reader: it measures 40,000 square feet, or nearly an acre in extent.

The visitor will better understand the expanded scene before him, and the

metropolis it represents, by taking four distinct stations in the gallery; and then examine in succession the views towards the North, the East, the South, and the West. Among the objects displayed towards

The *North*, the eye recognises Newgate Market, the old College of Physicians, Newgate, the Blue-coat School, St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Smithfield Market with its crowds of sheep and oxen, and the new Post-office. These are objects near the fore-ground: beyond them are Clerkenwell, the Charter-house, and the lines of Goswell and St. John's Streets, Pentonville, Islington, and Hoxton. In the next, or third distance, we descry Primrose-hill, the noted Chalk-farm, Hampstead, and a continued line of fine wooded and wild hills, to Highgate. The bold Archway and excavated road at the latter place, and the line of the great North-road, from Islington to Highgate, is clearly to be traced; whilst Stamford-hill, Muswell-hill, part of Epping-forest, and portions of Essex, Hertfordshire, and Middlesex, bound the horizon.

To the *East* is displayed a succession of objects all differing from the former in effect, character, and associations. Whilst that view exhibits the quiet, the rural, the cheerful scenery of the environs of London, this presents us with the immense bustle and business belonging to the ever-flowing Thames, the commerce dependant thereon, the massive warehouses and spacious docks constructed for the stowage and security of imported articles of luxury, utility, and wealth, from all parts of the globe. In the immediate fore-ground is St. Paul's School-house; whilst the lines of Cheapside, Cornhill, Leadenhall-street, and White-chapel, carry the eye through the very heart of the city; conducting it to Bow, Stratford, and a fine tract of woodlands in Essex. On the right and left of this line, are seen the towers of Bow Church.

Cheapside, St. Mary, Woolnoth, St. Michael, Cornhill, St. Ethelburg, Bishopsgate, and others of subordinate height; the Bank, Mansion-house, Royal-exchange, East India-house, and several of the Companies' halls. Another line, nearly parallel, but a little to the East, extends throughout Watling-street, (the old Roman road) to Cannon-street, Tower-street, and to that great national prison for royal and noble personages, that fortress and museum, the Tower. The course of the *Thames*, with its wilderness of masts and vessels, the numerous docks and warehouses on its banks—the fine Hospital of Greenwich, and the equally fine country beyond it, contrasted with the levels of the Essex coast, are all defined and recognised in this direction.

Turning to the right, for the *Southern* view, the eye traces the undulating line of the Surrey hills, in the distance, and the Thames near the fore-ground. This noble river here assumes its real importance, and displays on its surface a countless number of various vessels, among which, the modern and useful steam-boat is particularly distinguishable. The fine bridges of London, Southwark, Blackfriars, Waterloo, and Westminster, are not only fully and clearly marked, but constitute very imposing and interesting features. In tracing the two banks of the river, from London-bridge to the westward, an amazing number and variety of public and private buildings arrest the attention, and separately awaken reflections and associations of irresistible interest.

The *Western* view unfolds a new and different series of objects. First in effect, in beauty of execution, and in imposing character, are the two campanile turrets, the pediment, and the roof of the western end of St. Paul's Cathedral. The painting here is both masterly and magical; it completely deceives the eye and imposes

on the imagination. The spectator cannot believe that these towers are depicted on the same canvass and same surface as the whole line of objects from Ludgate-hill to St. James's-park. This view, to the West, embraces the long lines of thoroughfare, Ludgate-hill, Fleet-street, the Strand, Piccadilly, &c.; Holborn and Oxford-road, with the Inns of Court, Westminster, numerous churches and public buildings to the right and left; also Hyde-park, Kensington-gardens, and a long stretch of flat country to Windsor.

A staircase leads to the *Upper Gallery*, from which the spectator again contemplates the whole picture in a sort of bird's-eye view. Another flight of stairs communicates to a room containing the Ball, which was originally placed on the top of the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral, and also a fac-simile of the Cross. A few steps more, conduct the visitor to the summit of the building—to a convenient and safe gallery, which commands extensive views over the houses, adjacent park, and distant country. If the weather be fine, the spectator will be gratified in comparing the colouring, perspective, and effects of nature, with those of art which he had previously examined: and he will then be disposed to award to the latter its due share of merit and applause.

Having thus pointed out the chief characteristic features of this original "*Picture of London*," it will not be either irrelevant or improper to notice some of the difficulties and plans which have been employed and surmounted in its execution. The painting of such an extent of surface, and of such peculiar formation, is scarcely more difficult than to gain easy and safe access to every part of it. The common modes of scaffolding could not be adopted; nor was it found that

any method usually employed for finishing and colouring the interior surfaces of English buildings were available for the present purpose. Excepting the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral, there is no edifice in Great Britain to compare with this, in magnitude or shape; and even that offers but a small surface, in comparison. We may also conclude, that the scaffolding used for constructing the cupola was left for, and made use of by Sir JAMES THORNHILL; and his design consisted of several compartments or subjects, each complete in itself, and each independent of the others. Not so this Panorama of London, which, as one subject, requires unity, harmony, accuracy of linear and aerial perspective:—the commencement and finishing of lines, colours, and forms, must be made to unite and strictly amalgamate—the perpendicular canvass and the concave ceiling of stucco must not be seen, or even known to the spectator—the union of a horizontal and a perpendicular surface, though used, must not be detected. After the sketches were completed, on several hundred sheets of paper—after the walls of the building were raised, and its roof finished, the original Projector experienced the greatest difficulty in finding artists of talent, and sufficient hardihood to execute his required works. Many were tried, and many failed. The task was novel, intricate, hazardous. In this dilemma, Mr. E. T. PARRIS was found not only to be fearless in all situations, but possessing a fertile mind, a considerable knowledge of mechanics, perspective, and also practical execution in painting. To this he added enthusiasm and perseverance; by the combined powers of which, he was enabled, not only to adapt many original and ingenious plans to this peculiar and singular undertaking, but to effect much with his own hands, and direct others by his quick and discriminating eye. Standing in a basket, supported by two loose poles, and

lifted to a great height by ropes, he has painted and finished nearly the whole surface of this immense picture.—Thus the prodigious works of art and science are generally accomplished by the united efforts of two or more talented heads. One invents, projects, or gives tangible shape to some creation of fancy; whilst another, with the “organ of effectiveness,” as the phrenologists call it, will carry into execution, and put upon permanent record, the visions of a projector. It is a common opinion, though not always correct, that the French invent and the English execute: but we see daily instances of invention and execution being the operations alike of Frenchmen and Englishmen.

CONSERVATORIES and WATERFALLS.—In the prosecution of his professional vocation of “*Landscape Gardening*,” Mr. HORNOR fancied that his art had the necromantic, or talismanic power of creating mountains, dells, cascades, and the most delicious scenes of Paradise, from and within a small and limited piece of flat ground. He therefore sunk deep ravines, cut subterraneous caves, raised lofty banks, congregated rocks together, carried reservoirs of water to the tops of houses, and formed extensive and beautiful conservatories for the choicest flowers and shrubs. All these things have been nearly accomplished, and thus manifest the conquest of art over nature.

From the Southern Pavilion, the stranger enters a CONSERVATORY, which extends about 300 feet in length; and is subdivided into six different compartments, each varying from the others in form, arrangement, size, and contents. All are covered with glass—all are filled with the most beautiful plants and flowers—all are calculated to delight, not merely the botanist and florist, but every class of

visitors. To particularize either the variety of these, or their contents, would require many pages, and we cannot employ many lines. In one of the apartments, a large and lofty dome, glazed from the ground to the summit, surrounded by flowers, and almost lined with creeping and pendant plants, is a fountain of novel design and pleasing effect. Bordering a circular basin is a series of shells and corals; immediately within which is a continued row of jet-d'eaus. These throw a sort of transparent veil or mantle of water high in the air, with an inclination to converge and fall in the centre upon a columnar mass of shells, corals, and mosses. Near the top of this mass is a sort of dial of shells, which continually revolves by the action of invisible machinery, and which, combining with the spray from the falling waters, produce many beautiful prismatic effects when the rays of the sun glance on it in certain positions. From this part of the conservatory, a subterranean passage leads to a suite of curious and beautiful rooms, fitted up in imitation of an ornamented SWISS COTTAGE. This was designed by P. F. ROBINSON, Esq. Architect, who has evinced considerable taste in a publication on cottages and cottage villas, as well as in the execution of various buildings. That attached to the Colosseum consists of four apartments, the largest of which has a spacious fire-place, calculated to contain a whole family,

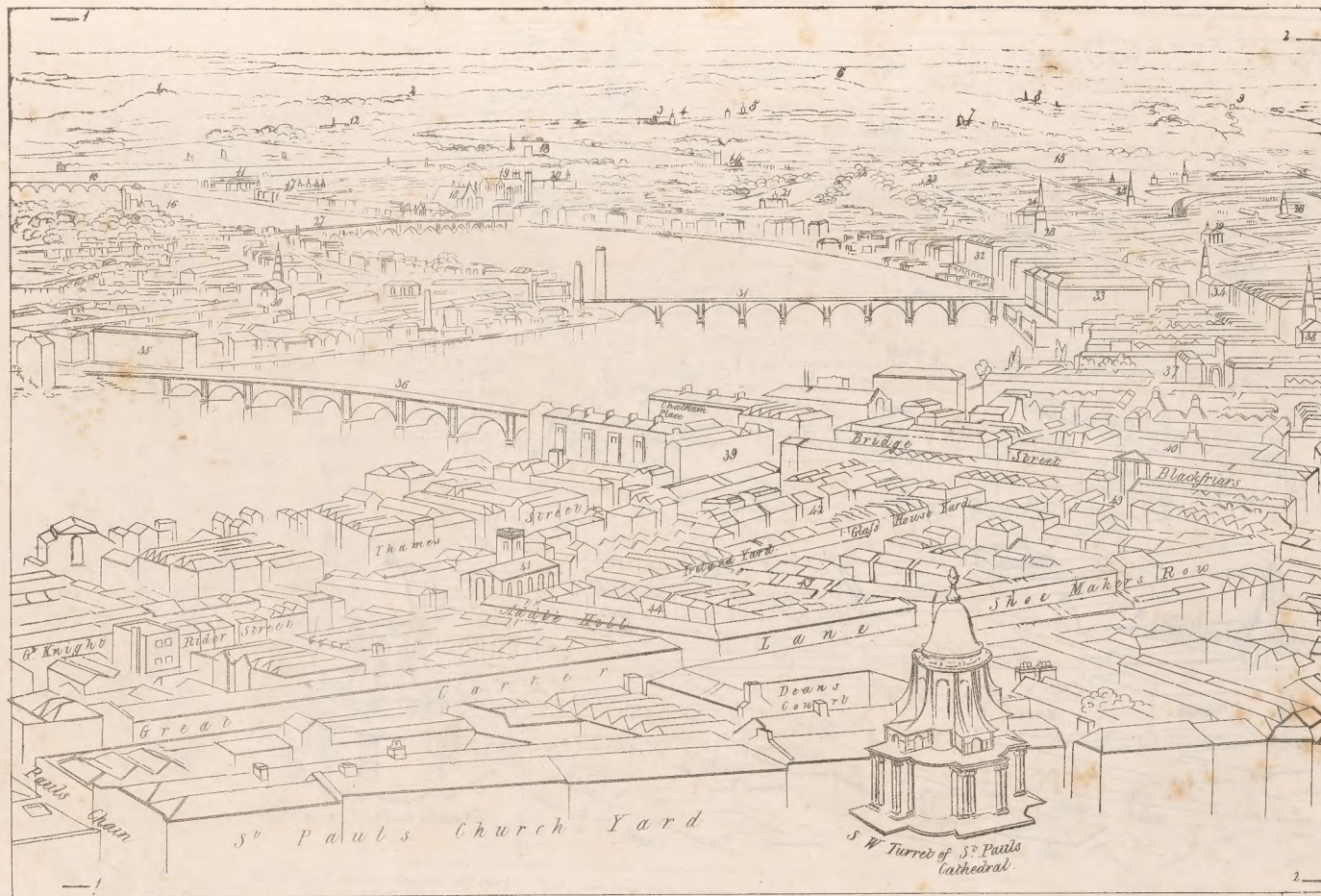
seated at the sides of its ample hearth. Facing it is a recessed window, which commands a view of a mass of rock-scenery, ornamented with waterfalls, of singular contrivance and singular effect.

Such are the chief objects and features of the public exhibition at the Colosseum. Surprising, original, and astonishing, as is this exhibition, it would be easy to extend the account, by expatiating on the peculiarities and novelties of each object; but to the visitor, it is thought that a brief essay will at once be acceptable and satisfactory; and the stranger can never comprehend the varieties, vastness, and amazing effects of the Colosseum, by any account, however diffuse, and however eloquently written.

J. B.

May 28, 1829.

§ For an account of the Scenery, Terraces, Villas, and Gardens, in the Regent's Park, and for Plans, Views, Sections, &c. of the Public Buildings of the Metropolis, the Reader is referred to BRITTON'S *Original Picture of London*, 18mo.; and *Illustrations of the Public Edifices of London*, 2 Vols. 8vo.



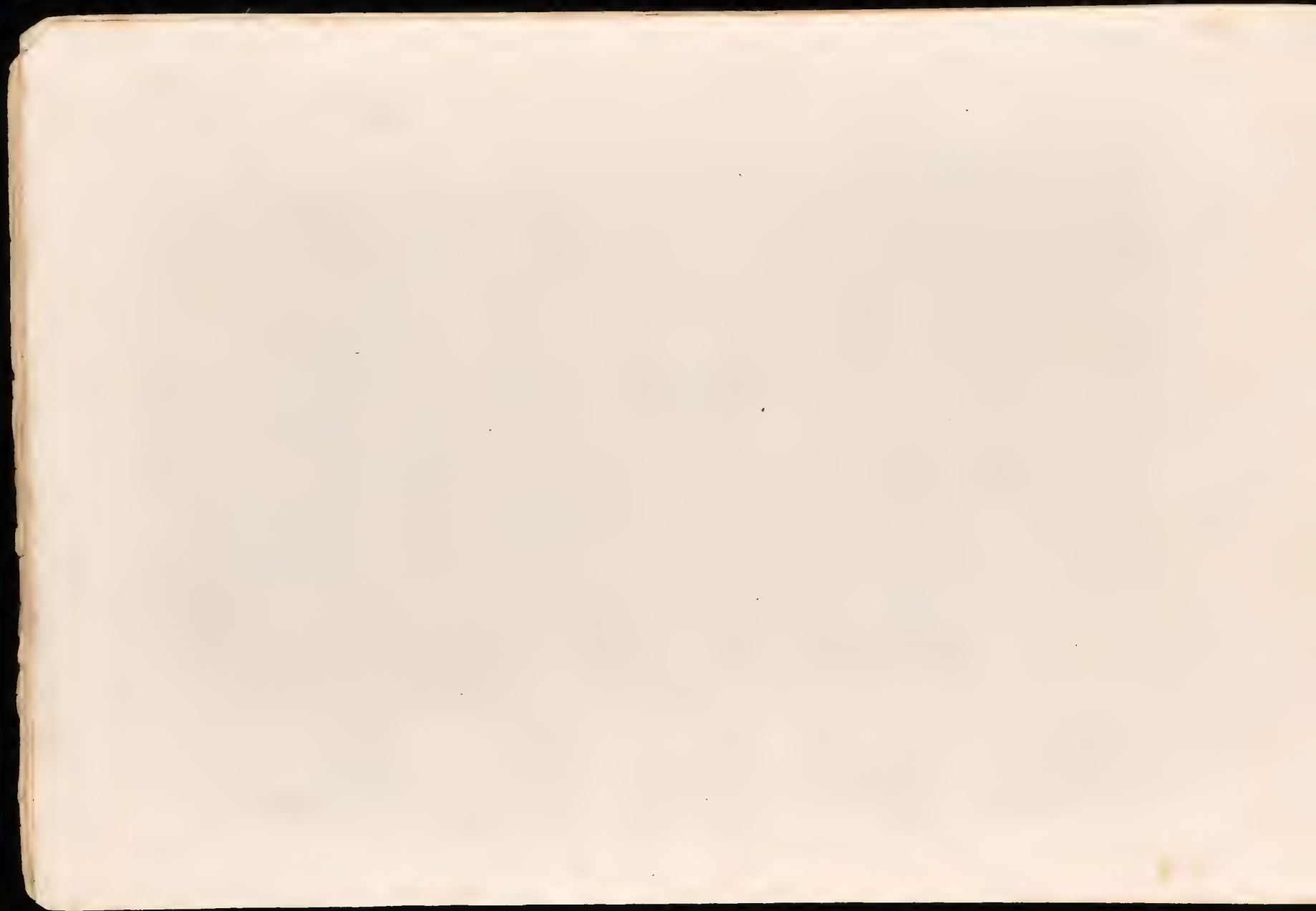
- 1 Wimbledon, Surrey.
- 2 Wimbledon Park.
- 3 Putney.
- 4 Fulham.
- 5 Northlake & Barnes.
- 6 Richmond Hill.
- 7 Chiswick & Hammersmith.
- 8 Pagoda, Ken Gardens.
- 9 Acton, Middlesex.

- 10 Vauxhall Bridge.
- 11 Penitentiary, Millbank.
- 12 Wandsworth.
- 13 Battersea.
- 14 Chelsea new Church.
- 15 Hyde Park.
- 16 Lambeth Palace.
- 17 St. John's Church, Westminster.
- 18 Westminster Hall.

- 19 Westminster Abbey.
- 20 Chelsea Hospital.
- 21 War Office Horse Guards.
- 22 Buckingham Palace.
- 23 St. James's Park.
- 24 Italian Opera House, Haymarket.
- 25 St. James's Church, Piccadilly.
- 26 St. James's Church, Soho.
- 27 Westminster Bridge.

- 28 St. Martin in the Fields.
- 29 St. Paul, Covent Garden.
- 30 Lambeth new St. W. B. Road.
- 31 Waterloo Bridge.
- 32 Adolphus Terrace.
- 33 Somerset House.
- 34 St. Mary le Strand.
- 35 Aldon Place B. Bridge.
- 36 Blackfriars Bridge.

- 37 The Temple.
- 38 St. Clement's Church Strand.
- 39 Earl Street, Blackfriars.
- 40 Bridewell Hall, Bridge Street.
- 41 St. Andrews Wardrobe.
- 42 Printers Square.
- 43 Viner Street, Blackfriars.
- 44 Wardrobe Place.
- 45 St. Andrews Hall.





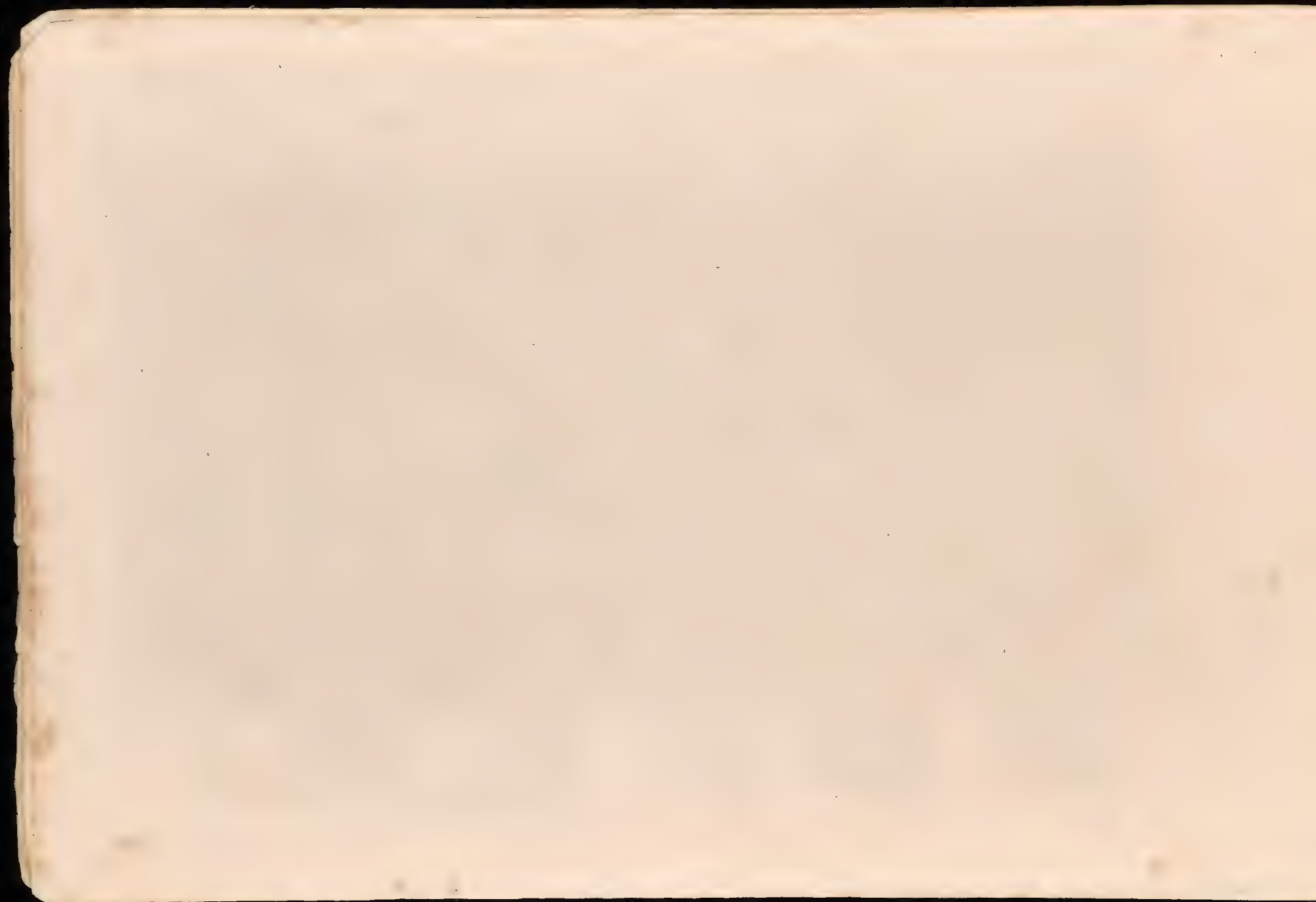
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 10 St. James's Church

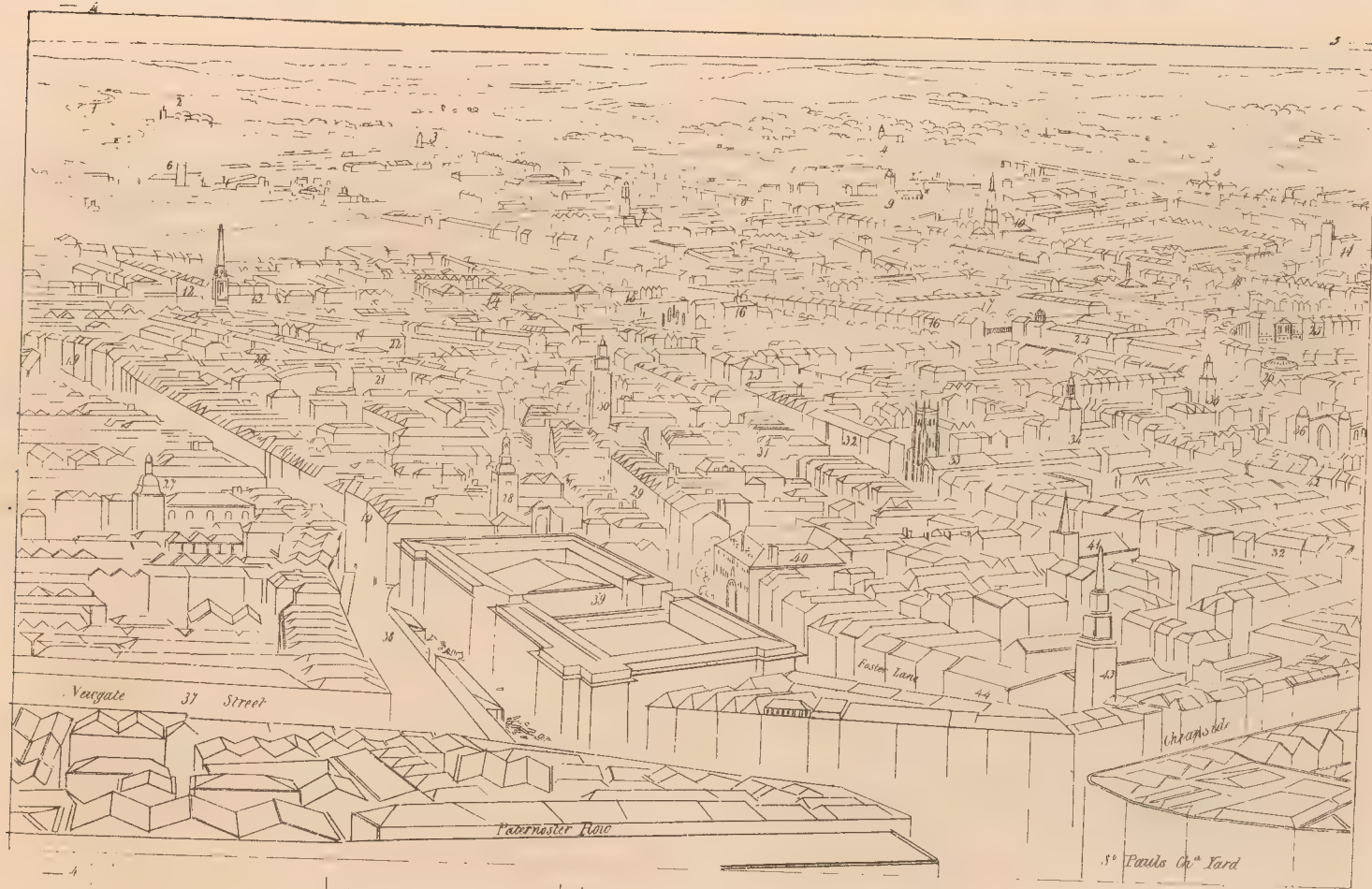
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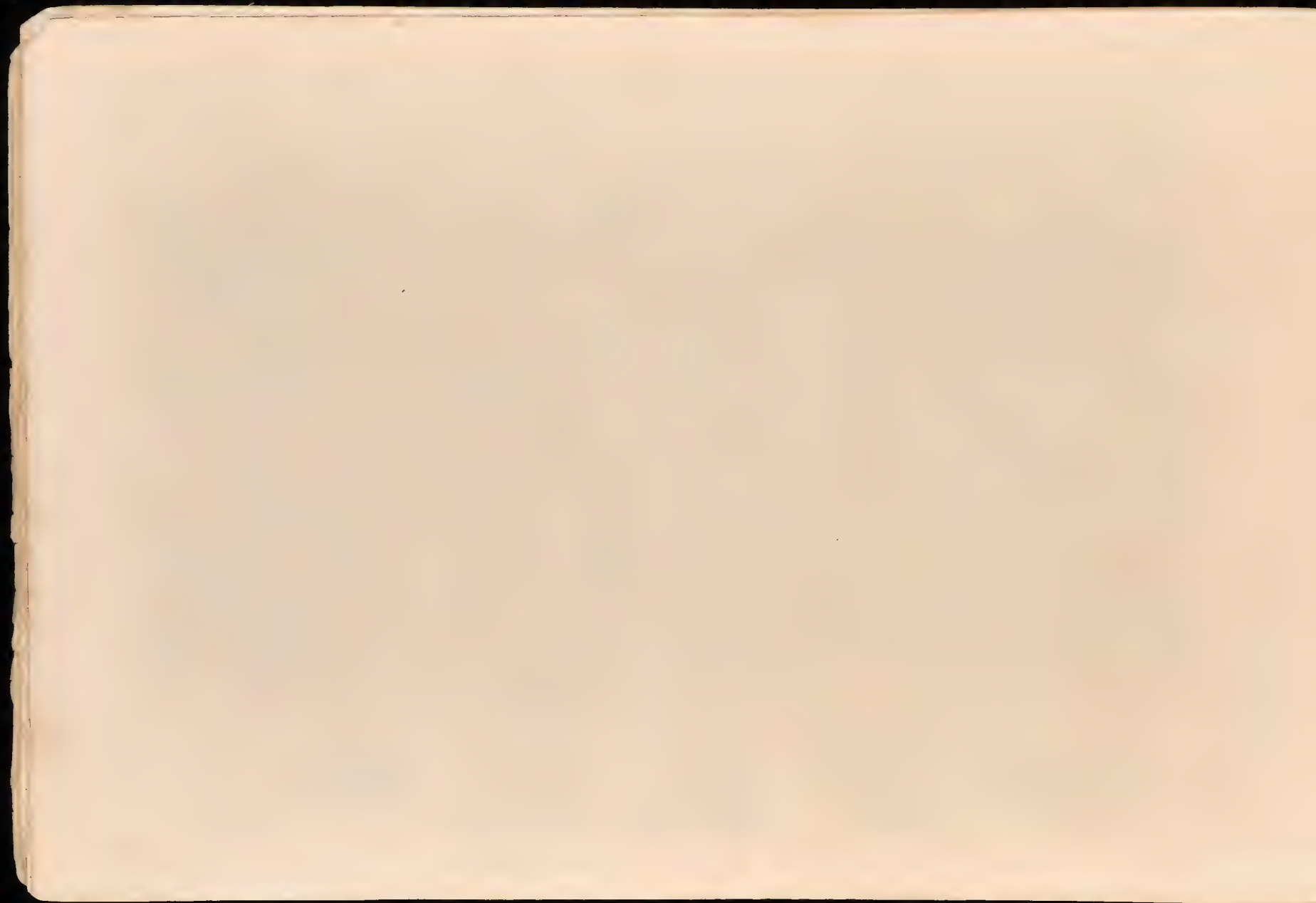
- 1 The Van Rouver
- 2 Old Church Stoke Newington
- 3 New Church
- 4 Hackney Church
- 5 Jews' Chapel & School Bethnal Green
- 6 New Church Stoke Green
- 7 New Church Foston
- 8 Haggerston Road

- 9 Haggerston New Church
- 10 St. Leonard Shoreditch
- 11 St. Matthew Bethnal Green
- 12 Ironmonger Row St. Luke's
- 13 St. Luke's Old Street
- 14 St. Luke's Hospital
- 15 Lyngton St
- 16 Artillery Row
- 17 Finsbury Square
- 18 Disham Gate Street

- 19 Aldersgate Street
- 20 Barbican
- 21 Tower Crescent
- 22 Golden Lane Brewery
- 23 Chapel Street
- 24 Finsbury Place
- 25 London Institution, Moorfields
- 26 Golden Square Chapel London Wall
- 27 St. Dunstons Aldersgate
- 28 St. Anne's St. Anne's Lane

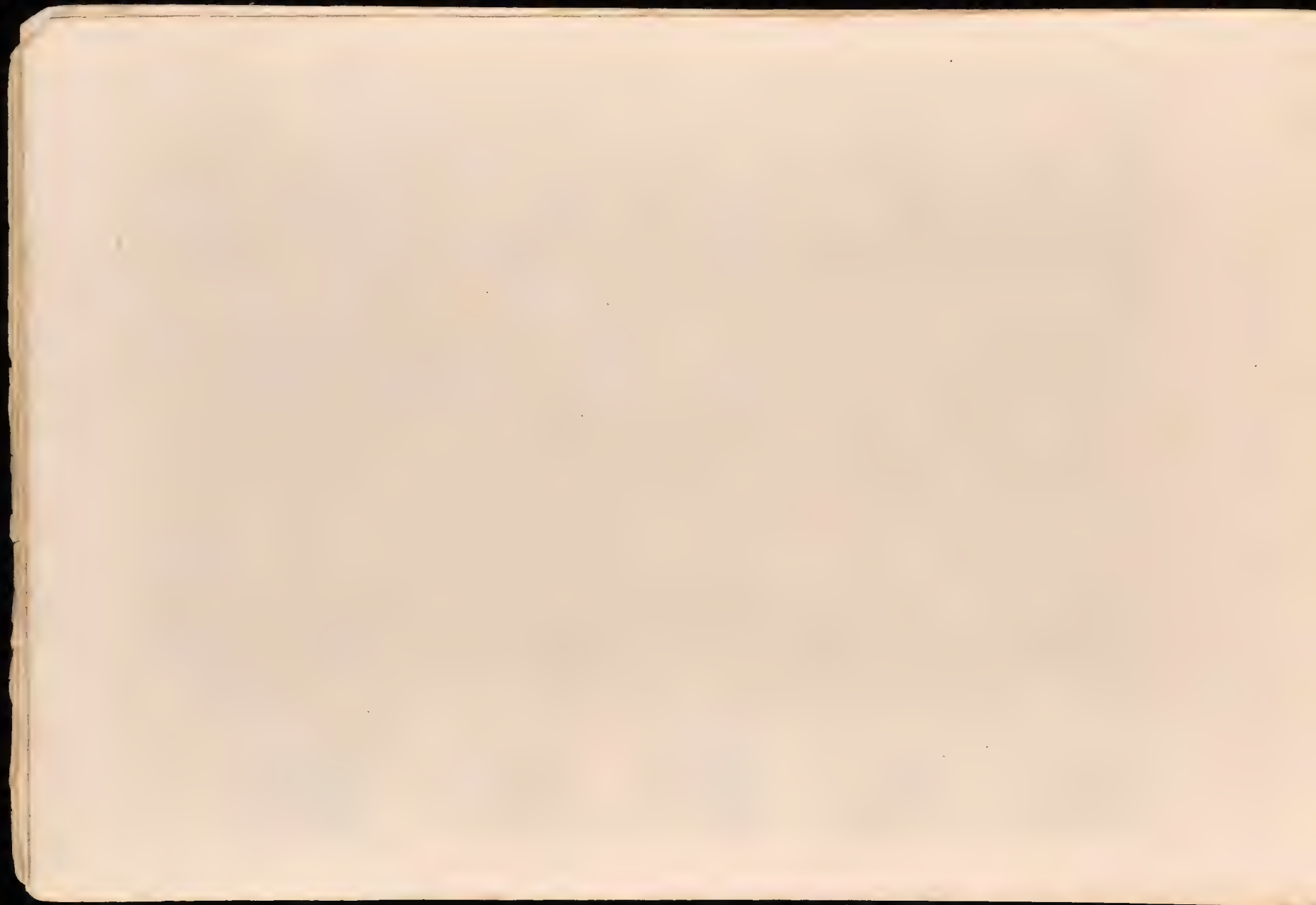
- 29 Foster Lane
- 30 St. Giles, Cripplegate
- 31 Aldersgate Street
- 32 Fleet Street
- 33 St. Dunstons, Wood Street
- 34 St. Mary, Aldersbury
- 35 St. Michael, Bassinghall St
- 36 Guild Hall
- 37 Sea Barge Street
- 38 St. Martin le Grand

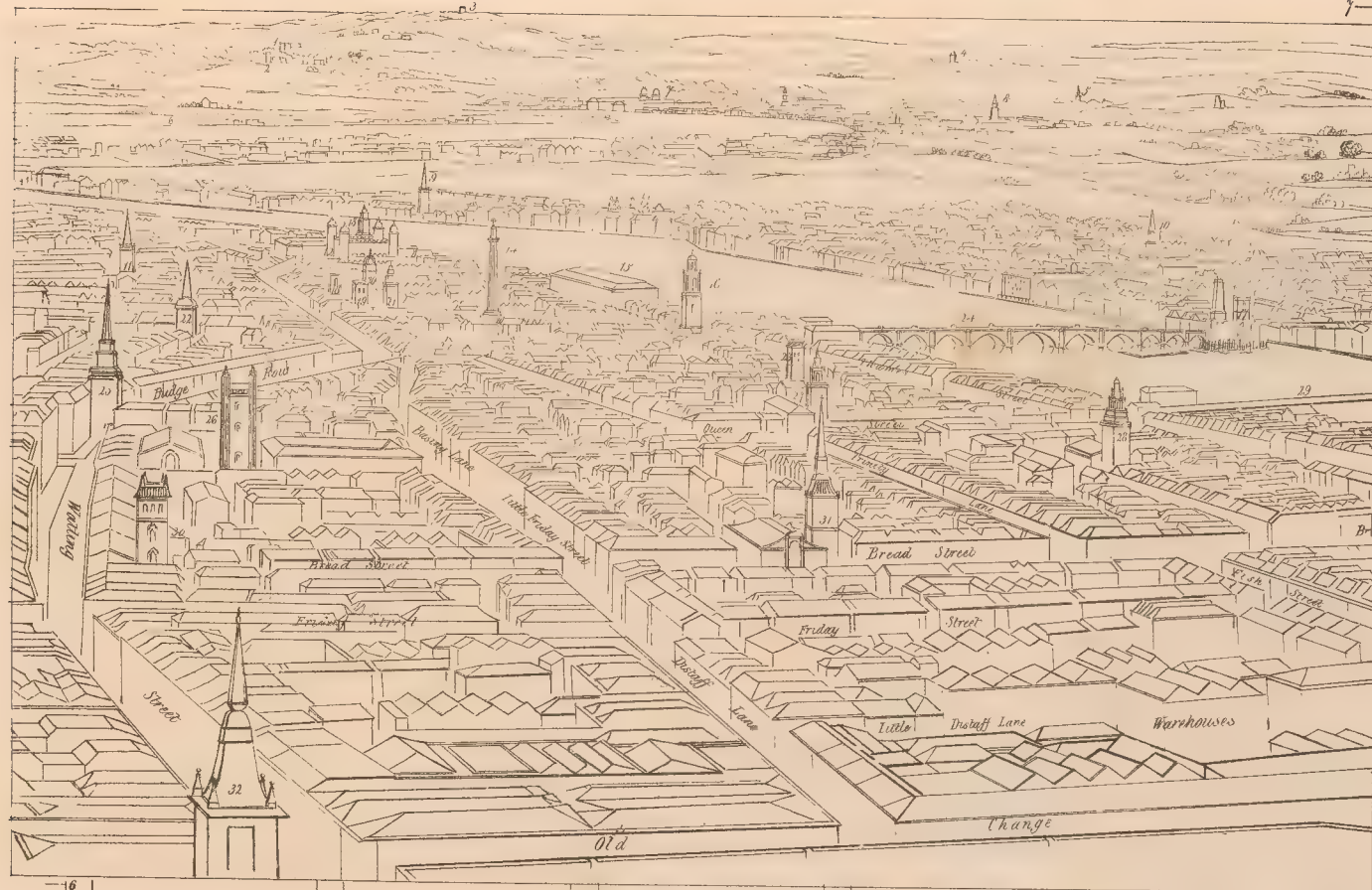
- 39 New Post Office
- 40 Goldsmiths Hall
- 41 St. Michael Wood Street
- 42 Aldersbury
- 43 St. Paul's Lane
- 44 New Foster Lane





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| 1 | Stratford Town | 10 | Christ Church, Westgate | 19 | Bank of England | 28 | St. Mary, Oldgate |
| 2 | Devon House | 11 | St. Mary, Oldgate | 20 | St. Paul's Church | 29 | St. Mary, Oldgate |
| 3 | Lancashire House | 12 | Commercial Road | 31 | St. Bartholomew | 30 | St. Lawrence, Oldgate |
| 4 | Porter Church | 13 | West London Road | 32 | Royal Exchange | 31 | St. Thomas, Oldgate |
| 5 | Marl House, Blackwall | 14 | City Canal | 33 | St. Michael, Cornhill | 32 | St. James, Oldgate |
| 6 | Westgate, Kent | 15 | St. of Bees | 34 | St. Peter | 33 | St. James, Oldgate |
| 7 | St. Paul's, Westgate | 16 | St. of Bees | 35 | St. Andrew, Gracechurch | 34 | St. James, Oldgate |
| 8 | New Church, Globe Town | 17 | St. of Bees | 36 | St. Edmund, Lombard | 35 | St. James, Oldgate |
| | | 18 | St. of Bees | 37 | St. Dennis, Fenchurch | 36 | St. James, Oldgate |
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- 1 Cathedral of St. Dunstons
- 2 Charterhouse
- 3 Tower of London
- 4 St. Dunstons
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- 6 St. Dunstons

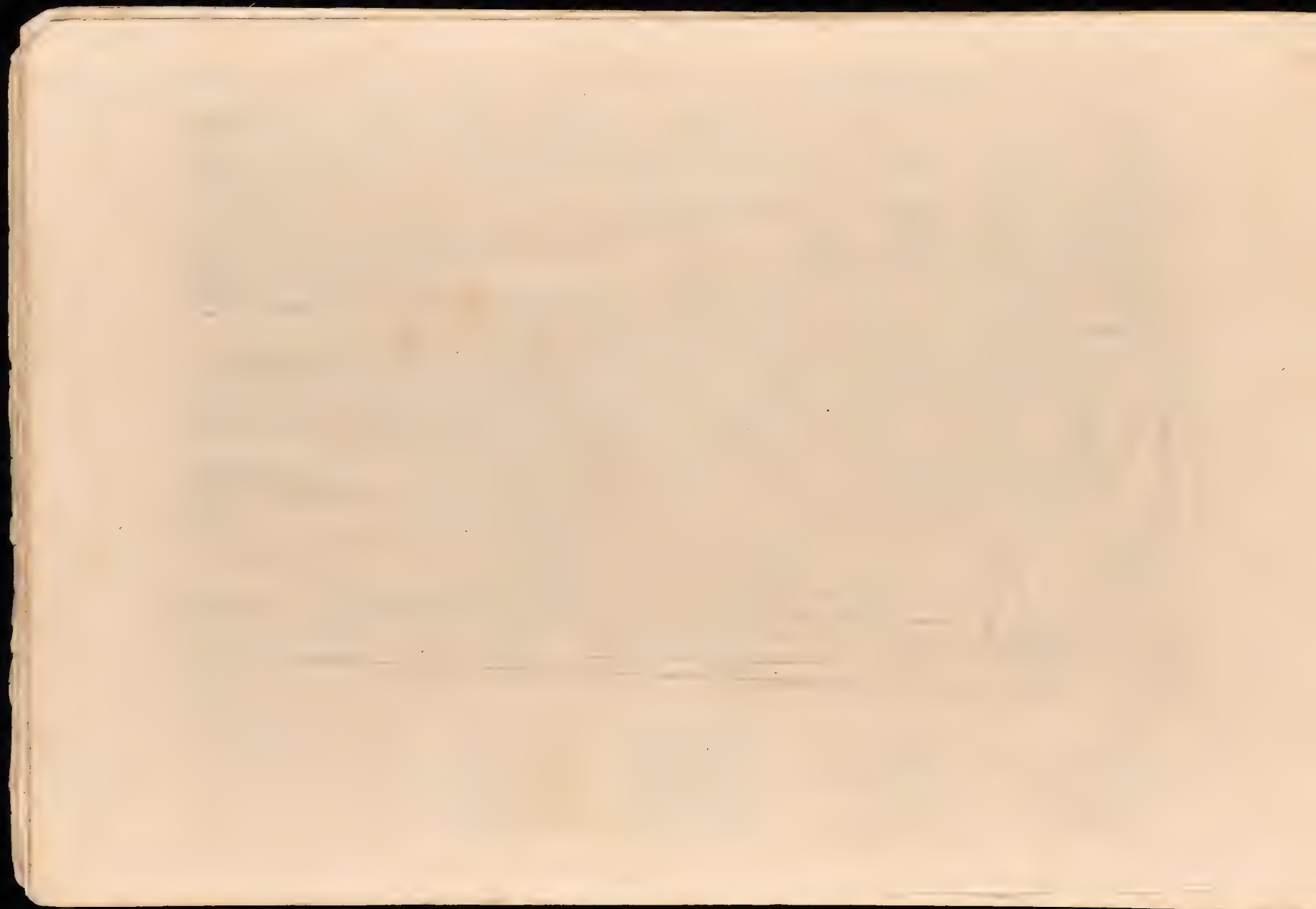
- 7 French Church
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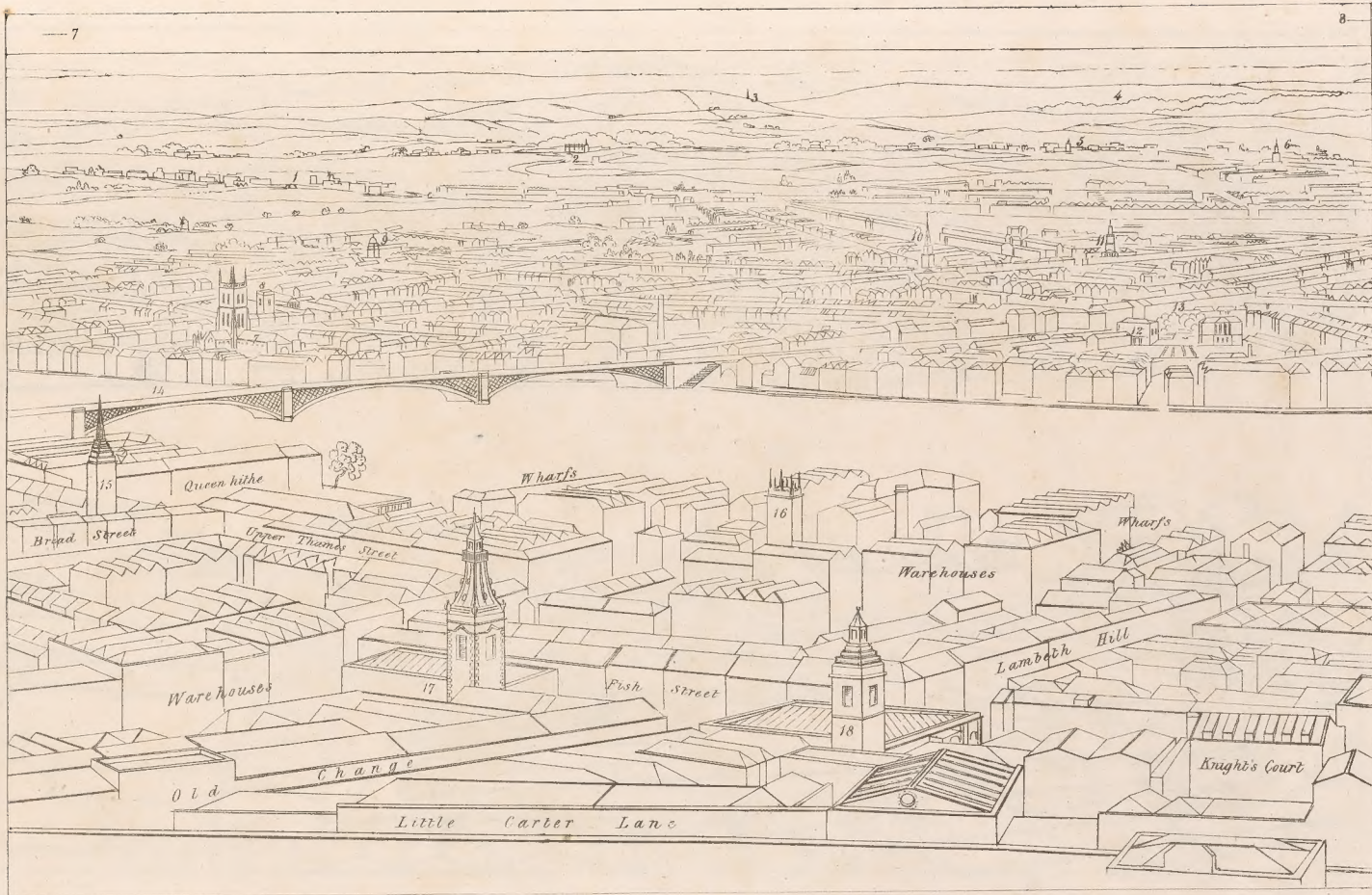
- 15 The Custom House
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7





1 Bridge on the Surrey and Kent R.R.
2 Chapel, Peckham
3 Spire of Beckenham Ch. Kent

4 Dulwich Woods
5 Camberwell, new Church.
6 St. Peter's, Walworth.
7 St. Saviour Southwark

8 St. Thomas' Southwark
9 Bermondsey Church.
10 St. George, High St. Dover
11 New Church Dover Road

12 Pelts Vinegar Manufactory
13 Union Street,
14 Southwark Bridge
15 St. Michael Thames St.

16 St. Mary, Thames Street
17 St. Nicholas, Fish Street.
18 St. Mary ditto

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1. Norwood new Church.
2. Streatham, Surrey.

3. South Bracton Church.
4. Bracton Tiel.
5. Elephant & Castle, Newington.
6. Newington Church.
7. Newington Church.
8. Clapham.

9. Kings Bench Prison.
10. Surrey Theatre, Battersea.
11. Van Balthazar, Bath.
12. Trenchard Bridge.
13. Osborn Street, Borough.
14. Nelson Sq. Putney & St.

15. Rowland Hill's Chapel.
16. Great Surrey Street.
17. Christ Ch. d.
18. Coburg Theatre.
19. Holland, St. Bankside.
20. Back of Aldison Place.

21. St. Bennet, Thames Street.
22. Doctors Commons.

Wm. Weber.
VIEW taken from CHRIST CHURCH MEADOW
OXFORD.
1871.
J. G. Jackson
J. G. Jackson



Ed
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